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## **U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez on *CNN's* "American Morning" with Joe Johns**

*Excerpt of Transcript*

GUTIERREZ: I think one of the big challenges that a new Secretary of Commerce will have is to convince constituents, convince congress that trade is important. Right now there is a sense that we may -- that it would be better to back away a bit, that maybe not doing so much trade. We frankly are falling behind in terms of our ability to access markets to open up markets, versus other countries. Europe has more free trade agreements than we do. China has more free agreements than we do and we're sort of standing still. We signed the Colombia agreement 700 days ago, it still hasn't been approved. So I think that will be a very key challenge for the next Secretary of Commerce to convince everyone that trade is for the good of our country and that we can't afford to stand still, we've got to push forward.

HOST: You are one of the people calling for a bailout, or rescue plan for the auto industry as it were, as long as the automobile companies can show economic viability. Whys that been so hard to get to some type of closure on an agreement for this industry, which so many people say is needed so badly?

GUTIERREZ: Well, first of all, Joe, we believe this is an important industry. The president has said so. We're talking about a lot of jobs. We're talking about an important part of our manufacturing base, a lot of R&D, so the automobile industry is important. We all agree, I believe that Democrats and Republicans agree that they should show viability, no one wants to put money, taxpayers' money, into a company that isn't viable. Where there appears to be some discrepancy, assuming we get over -- we all agree they have plans to viability -- is where the money comes from. We are proposing to take the money from a bill that has already been approved for the auto industry, which is section 136 of the energy bill, we don't think it is a good idea to go into the financial rescue package that was intended exclusively for the financial industry and start opening up that package for other industries. If we do that, where do you stop? Where do you draw the line? I can tell you there are many industries

who would like it get their hands on a piece of that package, then we get into something that I think will be difficult to control.

HOST: You know, it's kind of a contradiction in terms when you think of it. On the one hand, you're asking for long-term viability but if they could show long-term viability, the fact is they wouldn't be asking Congress and administration for a bailout in the first place.

GUTIERREZ: You're right. And it's a good point. You know, what we're asking for is a path to viability. Show us how you would get there. Show us how you would make your costs competitive. Show us what kind of -- what you would do with your product line. We know that there is pretty much of a bloated dealer network. Show us how you would somehow manage that. You know, show us a plan that would get you to viability and that's essentially the discussion. We have a lot of discussions around assumptions, but it is really is a path to viability as opposed to assuming they would get there immediately.